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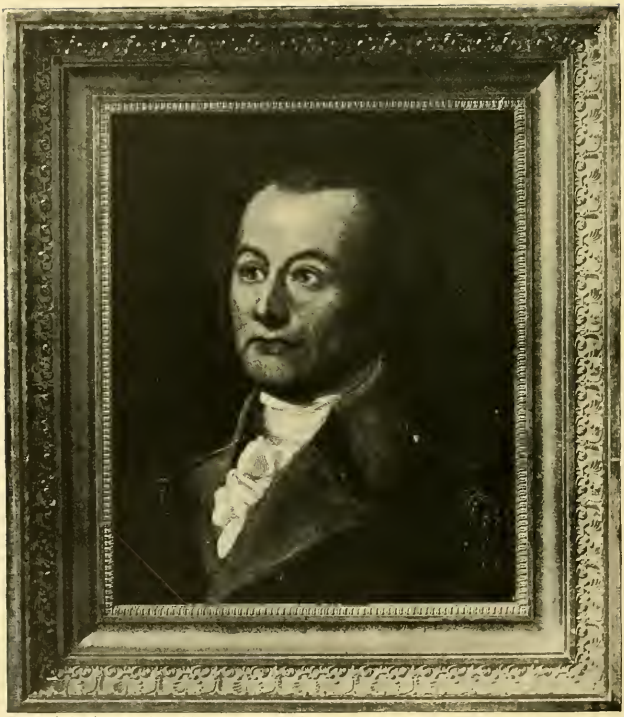

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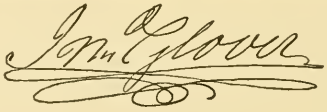

THE

BATTLE OF PELL'S POINT

(OR PELHAM)

OCTOBER 18, 1776.

Being the Story of a Stubborn Fight.

WITH A MAP, AND ILLUSTRATIONS FROM
ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHS AND
FAMILY PORTRAITS.

BY

WILLIAM ABBATT,

AUTHOR OF *The Crisis of the Revolution.*

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Preface.

IN the official record of services of two regiments of the British Army—the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Lancers—it is stated that they were engaged in the battle of "Pelham Moor."

Yet though this encounter is thus thought worthy of mention side by side with Waterloo and others of world-renown, few of our own histories contain any details of it, and one of the most popular gives it only three lines, in which are two serious errors.

Examination of all the authorities and personal familiarity with the scene and the topography of lower Westchester County, leads me to consider it one of the most important conflicts of the earlier part of the Revolution. The only author who gives it the rank which it deserves is one to whom I am indebted, and whose services to American history are too well-known to need extended mention: the late Henry B. Dawson, of Morrisania, N. Y.

But his interesting and valuable "Westchester County during the Revolution" (down to November, 1776) was published fifteen years ago, in a very small edition, and hence is not as widely known as it should be. In the preparation of my own story of the battle, I have been fortunate in receiving valuable assistance from several gentlemen, now or formerly residents of the town of Pelham; among them Rev. C. W. Bolton, H. D. Carey, Esq. (of City Island), Mr. M. G. Lathrop, now of White Haven, Pa., Rev. W. S. Coffey and Mr. H. S. Rapelye, of Mount Vernon.

To my friends E. S. Bennett and Z. T. Benson, of New York, I owe most of the photographs which add so much to

the narrative. The portrait of Colonel Glover is kindly furnished by Mr. S. Roads, Jr., the historian of Marblehead, and that of Colonel Shepard by Mr. A. N. Shepard, of Denver.

The portrait of Colonel Shepard is from the original by Trumbull, in his painting of the Battle of Trenton, at Yale College. That of Private Russell is furnished by Colonel Eckford Moore, Secretary of the Trenton Battle Monument Association. Russell was at the capture of Trenton and also at Pell's Point, and the face is copied from a portrait of him made in France a few years after the Revolution. It is almost unique as a contemporary portrait of a private soldier of the Revolution.

The map is from a late survey, and is carefully redrawn to show all the points of interest.

As the first full and illustrated account of the battle, I trust the book may be found a not unworthy contribution to the story of the Revolution, and particularly to the part of it connected with the County of Westchester.

W. A.

West Chester, N. Y.
1901.

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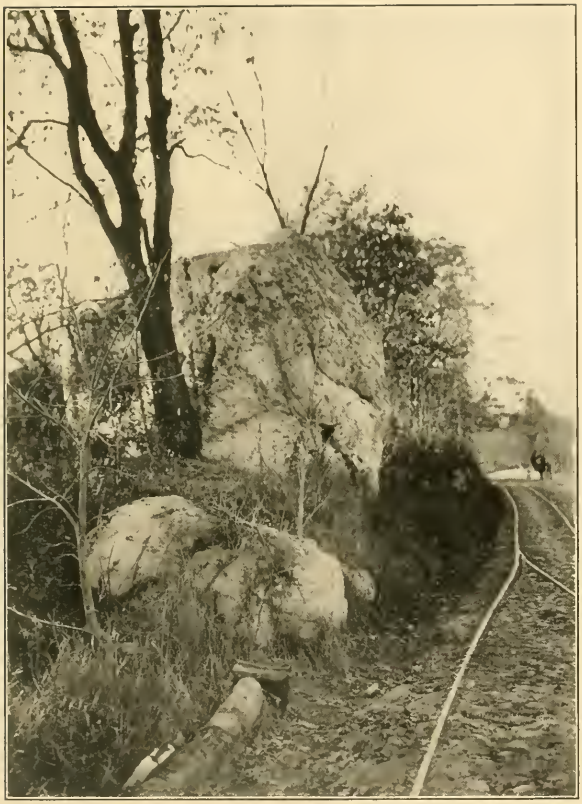
MAP OF BATTLE GROUND.

IN the Autumn of 1776, Washington, at a loss to fathom the plans of the British commander, and with his army only partly restored to confidence in itself by the successful action of Harlem Heights (September 16), was gradually withdrawing the greater part of it from New York City to Westchester County. For lack of draught horses the progress was necessarily slow, and as the artillery and the camp wagons had to be guarded on the way, the troops were strung out in a long line, affording an excellent opportunity for successful attack on the part of a vigilant enemy; which, happily, General Howe was not. Leaving about two thousand men, under Lord Percy, on Manhattan Island, the British commander embarked the rest of his army for Throgg's Neck, about thirteen miles up Long Island Sound, probably hoping to get in the rear of the patriots, force them to retreat on Harlem, and thus place them between two fires. On October twelfth he landed on the Neck, but his attempt to cross by the causeway—still existing—to the west shore of West Chester Creek was foiled by the troops under Hand and Prescott, and he remained idle for six days.

On the eighteenth, at one o'clock in the morning, he again embarked,[1] and crossed to Pell's Point, in the town of Pelham,

[1] The force embarked was not the whole army—Knyphausen, with most of the Hessians followed a few days after.

It was made up of the Light and Grenadier companies of the British regiments, and part if not all the German Chasseurs, several Hessian regiments, the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Light Dragoons, the field-guns of the Germans, and some guns of the Royal Artillery—taken from either the "E," "I," 6th or 9th batteries.



GLOVER'S ROCK.

(Where the conflict began.)

a few miles north. Here, at dawn, began the landing of the troops, and the conflict with which we are concerned soon followed.

John Glover, commanding the Massachusetts regiment known by his name, and also as the "fishermen's" or the "amphibious" regiment, which played so important a part in the retreat from Long Island, was then at the head of a brigade of four skeleton regiments, all of Massachusetts.

They were his own, the 14th; Joseph Read's, the 13th; Shepard's (late Learned's), the 3d; and Loammi Baldwin's, the 26th. The whole comprised only seven hundred and fifty

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I have not been able to find a complete list of the British regiments, but it is certain the Fourth and Sixteenth Foot (or their companies as mentioned above) were there.

The estimates made by American writers vary very widely, some putting the number as high as sixteen thousand: which is manifestly impossible. I have followed Dawson, who says four thousand—surely odds enough to enlist our admiration for Glover's brigade.

As Glover does not mention any cavalry among the enemy, it is probable that the dragoons fought dismounted.

Eelking does not give any full list of the Hessians present, but says: "Von Stirn's brigade was brought up." This consisted of four regiments: the Guards, Col. Von Wurmb, the Prince Charles, Col. Schreiber, the Von Ditfurth, Col. Von Bose (the regiment afterwards distinguished at the battle of Guilford Court House) the Von Trümbach, Col. Von Bischoffshausen, and the Third Grenadier Battalion, Col. Von Minnigerode.

The first four had 633 men each, the Grenadiers 500—so the Hessians alone comprised 3,000 men. At this rate the whole force would be more than Dawson's 4,000. (He says the Chasseurs were present, but Eelking does not mention them).

It is a coincidence that a squad or the 16th Dragoons captured General Lee at Basking Ridge, N. J., almost exactly a year later. He was then considered so important a capture that Major Harcourt was promoted to command the regiment on account of his daring venture.

men,[1] and had encamped the previous night—Thursday—somewhere[2] in the town of East Chester.

It is to a letter of Glover's, written a few days later, to an unnamed friend in New Hampshire, that history owes most of its knowledge of the BATTLE OF PELHAM, destined to have so important a bearing on the immediate future of the patriot army. The brigade was part of General James Clinton's division, and was the only force near Pell's Point, at which place General Heath had foreseen the need of a guard, and to which effect he had notified General Nixon.

It was very early that morning when the vigilant Colonel, acting as Brigadier in Clinton's absence, was astir. He writes: "I went on the hill with my glass, and discovered a number of ships in the Sound under way (and) the (small) boats, upwards of two hundred, all manned (filled with troops)."

At this time General Charles Lee was the next in rank to Washington, and the successful defense of Charleston the previous June was popularly attributed to his exertions (although really owing chiefly to Moultrie and Rutledge). Hence Glover naturally at once sent Major Lee,[3] of his regiment, to report to

---

[1] On October 5th the returns showed:

Glover's,	170	privates fit for duty.
Read's,	220	" " " "
Shepard's,	204	" " " "
Baldwin's,	234	" " " "
Total,	843	

[2] President Stiles of Yale College, in his *Diary*, Vol. VI, says:

22d October,
Camp at Mile Square, East Chester.

Friday morning, the 18th, we were alarmed, and the enemy landed at Rodman's Point (a place about four miles from our encampment).

[3] William R. Lee was born in Manchester, Mass., ——— ——, 1744, and died in Salem, October 24, 1824.

him for orders. But although only three miles distant,[1] he came no nearer the scene of action, nor is it apparent that he gave the Major any orders for the anxious Brigadier, whose letter fervently exclaims: "I would have given a thousand worlds to have had General Lee, or some other experienced officer, present, to direct or at least approve."

But it proved a blessing in disguise: Lee would probably have ordered a retreat—Glover was a man of action, diminutive as to stature but great as to energy; and now, suddenly thrown on his own resources, he showed that he could act promptly, vigorously, and, as the result proved, wisely. His seven hundred and fifty, with three small cannon, were to face Howe's four thousand, and to acquit themselves with credit.[2] He naïvely adds that "it was very lucky" he acted without waiting for orders (for) "the enemy had stole a march one and a half miles on us."

That distance from the British landing-place, as shown on their map,[3] would be about where the City Island road comes into the "Shore Road."

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[1] Glover.

[2] The resistance at Pell's Point was characterized by a persistency of purpose and a stubbornness of hand-to-hand fighting which kept his (Washington's) main army practically intact.

CARRINGTON (*Washington the Soldier*, p. 91).

[3] The map on which the others of that period have been based, is by the British engineer Sauthier. I have used it in part for making my own, but have corrected its errors, such as placing the scene of battle further north, within the limits of New Rochelle, not Pelham. He has made so many errors in other parts as to be open to correction in this instance. Dawson points out that on the Hudson River side he put Yonkers several miles too far north, and made other errors, which make it evident that he similarly misplaced the spot with which we are concerned. The correct location of the scene of battle is determinable by two widely separated points: the bridge over the Hutchinson River, and "Glover's

LOOKING EAST FROM GLOVER'S ROCK.

As Glover's Rock is just a mile from the end of Pell's Point, either the Colonel miscalculated the distance or the British retreated half a mile on meeting his force. The former is the more likely; exact calculation is the *forte* of but few men, especially when going into battle.

The great glacial boulder, about twelve feet high, which is known as "Glover's Rock," stands on the south side of the

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Rock," on the Pell's Point road. The first is not hard to identify, as it was then the only bridge over the stream (for the modern "Boston Post Road" did not then exist, and hence had no bridge). The allusion of Colonel Glover in his letter, to "a run of water" and to the bridge planks taken up in the morning, further identify the spot, as does President Stiles' reference to "a causeway." The short piece of road from Wolf's Lane to the bridge is low now, and might very well have been a causeway in 1776, when the volume of water in the little river was certainly greater than now, and a causeway would have been almost essential to keep the road above water, particularly during high tides.

There is no other stream which Glover could have crossed on his way to the head of Pell's Point; and had he been so far to the north as Sauthier indicates, the enemy would hardly have come in contact with him.

Well-attested tradition identifies "Glover's Rock," as do also the cannon-balls found there when the street-railroad was constructing. They were from either the British field-guns or the men-of-war in the Sound (two accounts mention a heavy fire being kept up by the ships during the debarkation of the troops).

These two points being ascertained, it is easy to see the shortest route between them was the present "Split Rock road," over which Glover must have marched, and on which occurred the severest fighting.

That the conflict was along the line of this road is certain also from Glover's words: "I disposed of my little party to the best of my judgment: Colonel Read's on the left *of the road.*" (The italics are my own).

There was no other road leading to Pell's Point.

Of the retreat he says: "We retreated to the bottom of the hill" (this must have been Wolf's Lane hill, as it is directly on the line of their retreat) "and had to pass through a run of water (the bridge I had taken up before) and then marched up a hill the opposite side of the creek where I (had) left my artillery."

This agrees with Stiles, and the creek can be no other than the Hutchinson. Colonel Baldwin also specifically says in his diary: "This battle was fought near the Boston Post Road, on the S. E. side of the road toward their (the British) shipping."

road from Bartow Station of the New Haven railroad to City Island, about three-eighths of a mile from the station. At this point or just east, the land is so low that a high tide will come up to the roadway. The water to the north, shown in the view, is known as Le Roy Bay.

We may pause here for a moment to more particularly describe the tract of country with which we are concerned. Mile Square, at or near which Glover's force camped the night before the battle, is too far west to appear on our map, but is on a line directly west of Grove Street and Bridge Street, Mount Vernon, on the hills west of the Bronx and the present City of Mount Vernon, which was non-existent in 1776. The eastern boundary of the city is the Hutchinson River, which, at the old Boston Post Road, is spanned by a little bridge[1] of which we shall hear more, and Wolf's Lane, on the other side, in the town of Pelham, climbs a hill to the crest at Pelham Manor Heights. On the other side of the modern Post Road, a short distance southeast, is a winding and picturesque road which for almost its whole length is at quite an elevation above the Hutchinson,[2] and from which the valley and the

[1] Three regiments were ordered to pass a causeway (the only passage) and march to oppose them, and our regiment (Glover's) with three pieces of artillery,* was posted on an eminence overlooking the causeway, to secure a retreat for the others and prevent the enemy from advancing.—*Stiles.*

*Glover says: "The ground being rough and much broken, I was afraid to risk it over." Evidently he had no horses to draw the guns.

[2] This winding stream, partly tide-water, flows in a sinuous course, forming the boundary between East Chester and Pelham. The name commemorates the celebrated Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, who, after her expulsion from Massachusetts in 1637, lived in Rhode Island until 1642, and then removed to this lonely spot, erecting a house near the stream and not far from "Split Rock." The Indians attacked it the next year, massacred all but one of the household, and she perished in the burning dwelling.

The Colonial Dames of New York have been solicited to erect a suitable memorial on the spot.

East Chester hills form an attractive landscape. It enters the "Shore Road" at the point shown in the illustration opposite page 17, and is known as Pelham Lane, the Prospect Hill road, and, more generally, the Split Rock road, from the remarkable natural curiosity shown opposite page 19—an enormous rock, riven by some unknown force through its very centre. Only a short distance south of its junction with the Shore Road[1] is the City Island road from Bartow, which we have already described. The distance between Glover's Rock and the Hutchinson bridge is about three miles, and most of the land is within the limits of Pelham Bay Park of New York City.

To return to Le Roy Bay: In the illustration opposite page 8, the figures in the background[2] are probably about where the British advance appeared. With a promptness much to his credit, Glover had at once sent forward a Captain[3] with his

[1] The present Shore Road did not exist in 1770, unless as a mere union between the City Island road and the Split Rock road—nor was there any bridge over East Chester Bay, where is now Pelham Bridge.

[2] This region contains many features of interest to the antiquarian and ethnologist, as well as to the historian. Under the great oaks to the left, near the water, is an Indian burial-ground, and out of one of the great rocks has been hollowed by the aborigines a cavity for grinding corn. To the north, just across Leroy Bay and almost opposite Glover's Rock, is the stone house of the Bartow family, succeeding that of the Pells, whose progenitor Thomas Pell bought his estate from the Indian sachem, whose daughter he afterwards married, about 1050.

From him the town of Pelham and the peninsula of Pell's Neck or Point derive their names.

The estate passed to his grandson John Bartow, in 1790, and only recently passed out of the family, on its acquisition by New York City as part of Pelham Bay Park.

[3] Although impossible to decide which Captain of Read's regiment, it must have been Peters, Pond or Warren, as one man from each of these companies was killed.

Andrew Peters was born in Medfield, Mass., January 24, 1742, and died ——

Oliver Pond was born in Wrentham, Mass.

Samuel Warren was born in Mendon, Mass.

company of forty men, to hold the enemy in check while the main body could be "disposed of to advantage" (his own words). On over the roads described the three regiments hastened eastward. Glover's own regiment being left at the Hutchinson in reserve, under command of Captain Courtis.[1] This reduced the effective force of the brigade to less than six hundred men.

Until recently these roads had substantial stone walls[2] on each side; but when to be macadamized a few years ago, the stone afforded a ready-to-hand material, and was used for the purpose. Their disappearance robs the battle-ground of a prominent and distinctive feature—for behind them, in the chill of that October morning,[3] were ranged the six hundred Massachusetts men.[4]

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[1] William Courtis.

(At that time Lieutenant Colonel Gabriel Johannot was absent on sick leave, and Major Lee, it will be remembered, had been despatched to General Lee—hence Courtis was the ranking officer). He afterwards became Major in Colonel David Henley's regiment.

[2] Howe, in his despatch to Lord George Germaine, calls them "Bend-stone walls"—a term unknown to me.

[3] The first shots were probably fired by 7 A. M. Glover's "very early" is indefinite, but Hutchins' Almanack (published by Hugh Gaine) for 1770, gives sunrise that day as at 6:32 and sunset at 5:28.

[4] Lossing says Glover's regiment wore blue cloth round jackets and trousers, a nautical dress appropriate to the "amphibious regiment." Still his description does not agree with Russell's uniform as shown on the statue, opposite page 15.

It should be remembered that few of Washington's soldiers were uniformed at that time, and those that were, were variously dressed.

Colonel Von Heeringen (see *post*) says of those he met at the battle of Long Island: "hardly one regiment was uniformed." The same state of things existed in Gates' army at Saratoga a year later.

Mr. F. D. Stone, librarian of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, said in an

LOOKING WEST FROM GLOVER'S ROCK.

(About here, probably, occurred the first encounter with Read's regiment.)

While impossible to definitely fix the position held by each regiment, Glover states clearly that Colonel Read's[1] held the most advanced—eastern—position on the left of the road. Shepard's,[2] similarly situated, was on the other side, and in

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address (1895): "At Brandywine no two were dressed alike." Just before the same battle, Lafayette said the troops were "ill-armed and still worse clad."

It must be said, however, that then a year's hard campaigning had passed since 1776, and this might account for the poor clothing.

[1] Joseph Read was born in Uxbridge, Mass., March 6, 1731.

His regiment—Thirteenth Massachusetts—is the only one mentioned as carrying a flag. Force (*Archives*, Series V, Vol. II, p. 244) says its ground was light buff, device a pine-tree and Indian corn, and two officers in the regimental uniform. One of them, with blood streaming from a wound in his breast, points to a group of children under the tree. The motto was: *For Posterity I bleed.*

What the "regimental uniform" was can only be conjectured.

[2] William Shepard was born in Westfield, Mass., December 1, 1737, and died there November 16, 1817. He was a veteran of the French and Indian war and the expeditions against Canada. He again entered the army in 1775, as lieutenant-colonel, and served through the war, when he had the record of twenty-two battles to his credit. (He is said by one writer to have commanded at Fort Henry—now Wheeling, W. Va.—when Elizabeth Zane performed the exploit which made her celebrated, but I cannot satisfactorily determine this).

In 1787 he was again in active service, commanding the troops which dispersed the insurgent force under Shays, and thus ended "Shays' Rebellion," at Springfield, Mass. During his long life he was an honored citizen of Westfield, holding almost every office in the gift of his community: State Senator and Congressman among them. Lafayette gave him a sword, which is now owned by a descendant.

It is sad to have to record that he was one of the many patriots who died poor in consequence of their patriotism.

—General Shepard might well be taken as a typical soldier of the Revolution —brave, earnest and God-fearing. The rough life of a camp in the critical period between boyhood and manhood did not corrupt his morals, the savagery of border warfare with the Indians did not affect the natural kindliness of his disposition. He appears to have had a certain grim humor of the Cromwellian kind; and it may be said of him indeed that he was a soldier after Cromwell's own heart.—*Memorials of the Mass. Society of the Cincinnati, by* J. M. Bugbee, 1890.

the rear (to the west), and Baldwin's[1] was still further west on the same side of the road as Read's.

At "Glover's Rock" the unnamed Captain and his forty men fired the first shots as they faced the party of advancing invaders, of about the same strength. Having thus put his three regiments in ambush, Glover rode to the front and ordered the advance guard to push forward—which they did, receiving the enemy's fire without loss, though only fifty yards distant. Their return fire was better aimed, and brought down four of the opponents. At that short range five rounds are exchanged.[2] Two of the Massachusetts men lie dead now, and several are wounded. The British are considerably re-enforced, and to remain longer against such odds, and exposed to what then and for a year afterwards the patriots were unable to resist—a bayonet charge—would be madness. The order is given to fall back—"which was

[1] Loammi Baldwin was born at Woburn, Mass., January 21, 1745, and died there October 20, 1807. His services to the cause of the colonies began with Lexington, and he was present at the battles of Long Island and Trenton. The hardships of a soldier's life proved too great for his constitution to support, and hence he was obliged to resign his commission in 1777, and retire to his native town, where he spent the remainder of his life. In civil affairs he took an active part, becoming Sheriff of Middlesex County, and a member of the Legislature. Two of his sons were noted as civil engineers, and the family is still prominent in Woburn. It is to Colonel Baldwin that is due the discovery and propagation of that valuable fruit, the Baldwin apple.

The portrait of him, opposite page 16 is from an engraving by Ritchie, furnished me by his grand-daughter, Mrs. C. R. Griffith of Woburn, from whom I have also received his diary of 1776, from which I quote several extracts.

[2] Draper, in his *History of King's Mountain*, says the time needed to load, prime and aim the flint-lock musket was three minutes. Thus the five rounds represent at least fifteen minutes. Colonel Von Heeringen says: "Their riflemen took a quarter of an hour to load, and we (the Hessians) overwhelmed them by rapid firing" (at the battle of Long Island). (Eelking: *The German Auxiliaries*, p. 31.)

Wm Shepard Cole

masterly well done,"[1] says Glover, when the enemy were less than a hundred feet away. With a cheer, they advance confident of an easy victory, But as at Bunker Hill, behind the wall to the right is a regiment biding its time:

Each man drew his watchful breath
Slow taken 'tween the teeth,
Trigger and eye and ear a-cock,
Knit brow and hard-drawn lips.

At about thirty yards, the solid column in front offers a mark impossible to miss. Read's two hundred level over the wall their motley array of heavy "Tower" muskets, light fowling pieces and long squirrel rifles, and a tremendous volley bursts forth, right in the face of the foe. A heavy cloud of smoke hides all for a moment—the moment when Read and his officers listen for the command which shall bring the disciplined ranks up to the wall, and over with a rush, following the deadly bayonets which won the day at Brooklyn.

But none is heard, and as the smoke clears away, the enemy's dead and wounded are seen lying thick along the grass-grown road, while the column itself is falling back towards[2] the main body, considerably in the rear.

It is Bunker Hill over again, so far, and Read's men drop back behind the wall, and wish for breakfast—for they have marched without it, and the chill October air is hunger-

[1] Our men behaved like soldiers, conformed to the orders of their officers, and retreated in grand order.—*Stiles.*

[2] The whole body of the 16th were forced to return by the fire of a single regiment, and many of them (were) old troops. The 4th regiment was one that ran.—*Stiles.*

We galled the enemy very much, brought them to a stand-still and finally to retreat till they were re-inforced.—*Baldwin, MS. Journal.*

PRIVATE JOHN RUSSELL,
OF GLOVER'S REGIMENT (14TH MASS.).
(Portrait from life—Statue on the Trenton Battle Monument.)

provoking. They have plenty of time to wish, for an hour and a half passes ere the enemy re-appears. Now he has his full strength, at least four thousand men, and seven cannon cover his advance with a steady fire, which happily is more impressive than harmful. At fifty yards, Read's men again pour their bullets into the close ranks. But this time the volley is not unexpected, and while it halts the column, it is promptly returned, as Glover says, "with showers of musquetry and cannon-balls."

The British commander[1] has not sent out any flanking parties which might take the patriots unaware, as they did on the retreat from Concord; and sheltered as they are Read's men load and fire steadily. For twenty minutes at least the sharp, irregular rattle of "firing at will" and the boom of cannon continue, until seven rounds[2] have been exchanged. Then retreat is ordered, and the Thirteenth march off, protected in some degree by the wall, until they have passed the point where Shepard's—the Third—is hidden on the opposite side of the road. Here they again line the wall, and await their turn.

It may be that, as both attacks have been met by Read, the enemy think his the only force confronting them. Certainly nothing else can explain the rashness with which they ad-

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[1] Howe is said to have been present in person.

[2] An eye-witness, whose letter was published in the *Freeman's Journal*, Portsmouth, N. H., and dated "Mile Square, Nov. 12," says:

"People may think what they please of the 'regular and spirited behaviour' of the British troops, but I that day was an eye-witness to the contrary. I saw as great irregularity, almost, as in a militia; they would come out from their body and fire single guns. Had we been re-inforced with half their number, we might have totally defeated them."

Loomis Baldwin

vance, cheering, unmindful that there are walls on either side of them, and maybe antagonists as well.

By this time it cannot be earlier than ten o'clock, and the two forces must be on the Split Rock road,[1] possibly near the old dwelling which in 1848, Bolton says, was occupied by B. S. Collins. Wherever it was that Shepard's two hundred were posted there occurred the hottest fight of the day; for after delivering an effective volley at short range, and again halting the enemy, a "long-continued and well-sustained fire was kept up on each side."[2] The bull-dog tenacity of British soldiers—and of the German mercenaries[3] also—was well shown here. Glover says the patriots kept up a constant fire, and held their ground until seventeen rounds had been fired. This shows over an hour's steady fighting. During this "the enemy's line was broken several times, and once in particular so far that a soldier of Shepard's leaped over the wall and took a hat and canteen from a Captain that lay dead on the ground they had retreated from."[4] Still, the odds were too great to warrant a longer stand, much less an advance; Glover there-

[1] The original name was probably Pell's Lane, as it led to or near Thomas Pell's house (still standing, though modernized). The view from the top of the hill is looking south over the valley of the Hutchinson. East Chester is in the distance, though not visible.

[2] Dawson.

[3] Just a month later, it should be remembered, the same Hessians climbed the steep bluff at Fort Washington, and steadily advancing, stormed the outer works and finally captured the garrison.

[4] Glover. The officer was Captain William Glanville Evelyn, of the 4th Regiment ("King's Own"). He was not killed, but mortally wounded, and died in New York November 6th. The body was buried in either the Lutheran Cemetery on Broadway, or in Trinity Church yard. He was descended from the celebrated John Evelyn, of the *Diary* and *Sylva*, and was, General Howe said, "a gallant officer."

THE SPLIT ROCK ROAD, AT JUNCTION WITH SHORE ROAD.

(Showing K. K. bridge, about a mile beyond which was probably the scene of the sharpest fighting.)

fore ordered the two regiments to withdraw, and marching west beyond where Baldwin's fresh men were awaiting their turn, behind a wall, they took their final position as his support. The spot is uncertain. It may have been at the crest of the hill, now called Pelham Manor Heights, where Wolf Lane extends northwest to the old Boston Post Road. The ground, Glover says, "was much in their favor." So was their artillery, which seems now to have come more to the front. While the Third and Thirteenth were retreating, Colonel Baldwin, apprehensive of a flanking movement, for which the locality was more favorable than had been the case further east, went on a reconnoissance with Ensign Wood[1] and thirty men. Wood, advancing too far, found the enemy advancing, and was wounded, but rejoined the regiment safely. The Twenty-sixth in its turn meet the enemy with a volley, but at that moment a retreat was ordered by Colonel Glover.[2] The illustration shows Wolf's Lane where it descends the hill.[3] Passing the Pell or Hay house at its foot, they wheeled to the left on the old Post Road, and marching along the short causeway which they had traversed that morning, crossed the Hutchinson. The original bridge long ago disappeared, as

[1] Sylvanus Wood.

[2] We could do but little before we retreated.—*Glover.*

Our troops were as calm and steady as though expecting a shot at a flock of pigeons, and not in the least daunted or confused. When the General (Glover) gave orders to retreat, it was (obeyed) with the greatest reluctance imaginable, though with as much good order and regularity as ever they marched off a Publick Parade.—*Baldwin.*

[3] Balls and brass ornaments are frequently found on the heights of Pelham. Near the residence of James Hay, Esq., part of a soldier's belt marked 16th Regt. was discovered.—*Bolton, Hist. Westchester Co.*, Vol. I (1st edition), p. 547.

(The Hay house is the former Pell house near the Hutchinson bridge. It is not the Thomas Pell house I have referred to, but a much later one).

FROM THE SPLIT ROCK ROAD LOOKING ACROSS THE VALLEY TO EAST CHESTER.

(St. Paul's Church in the distance.)

has done a second and more pretentious one on the site of the present commonplace affair shown in the view. As the flooring had been taken up in the morning, the troops must have had to get across as best they could, through deep, sticky mud.

Reaching the rocky heights beyond, they rejoined their comrades of Glover's own regiment, who covered their retreat by an artillery duel across the little valley until nightfall, without appreciable damage to either side.

General Howe made no effort to cross the stream,[1] but camped on the high ground opposite, his right extending nearly to New Rochelle, while the weary patriots fell back two miles and camped somewhere in the present Mount Vernon.[2] The next morning they retreated to Mile Square,[3] just west of the Bronx, and within the town of Yonkers.

As Glover's regiment had no part in the battle, and Baldwin's but a slight one, the chief participants were Read's and

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[1] Colonel Glover made such resistance from behind stone fences, that this last command (Howe's) went into camp "waiting for re-inforcements.—CARRINGTON: (*Washington the Soldier*, p. 125).

On the 18th we had two pretty smart skirmishes; after marching about three miles, we halted to get cannon, provisions, &c., brought forward.—Letter from "an officer of eminence" to his friend in Edinburgh, dated White Plains, Nov. 2. *Long Island Hist. Society's Collections*, Vol. III.

[2] After fighting all day without victuals or drink, we lay all night, the heavens above us and the earth under us, which was all we had, having left all our baggage at the old encampment we left in the morning.—*Glover.*

[3] The position of Mile Square is generally wrongly marked on the maps of the period; most having it too far south.

It was really, as Lossing says, about where the old Hunt's Bridge Station of the Harlem Railroad was (1840), just west of Mount Vernon. (The present road from Mount Vernon to Yonkers, which the electric railroad follows, would traverse part of it).

Dr. Stiles' date (see page 6), "Camp at Mile Square, East Chester," also identifies it.

SPLIT ROCK.

Shepard's, about four hundred against ten times their number of better armed, better trained and better supplied troops, having artillery. All had shared in the victory of Brooklyn, and though some were also of the detachment driven back at Harlem Heights in September, numbers were more evenly matched then. But the contrast between numbers and equipment was not more striking than between the losses on the two sides.[1] Glover's report shows only six privates* killed and Colonel Shepard and twelve privates wounded (apparently Ensign Wood did not report his own wound). Shepard was dangerously hurt, a bullet piercing his neck.

The enemy's loss was mostly among the Hessians; but as their officers reported only to their superiors in Germany, no historian has been able to give exact figures.† Of the British only three privates were killed[2] and twenty wounded, as were also Captain Evelyn, whom we have mentioned before, and Lieutenant Colonel Musgrave,[3] who commanded the First

[1] The enemy must have lost at least two hundred men dead. I judge from what I saw myself, and good information.—*Baldwin.*

*In Read's regiment, Samuel Cole, of Capt. Pond's company; Daniel Deland, of Capt. Warren's; Ezekiel Fuller, of Capt. Peters'. In Shepard's regiment, Sergeant Charles Adams, Sergeant James Scott, private Thaddeus Kemp, all of Capt. Isaac Bolster's company.

†Several Hessian officers are buried in the church-yard of St. Paul's at East Chester (see the view opposite p. 22). The edifice dates from 1764.

[2] Lushington says they lost two light infantry officers (names not given) and some men. He says the Grenadiers were exposed only to the fire of the American artillery, "which was ill-served." (Lord Harris was the senior captain of the 5th Foot, and captain of the Grenadier company).

This shows that this regiment at least took no part in the encounter until the Hutchinson had been crossed, as it was only then the American cannon were used.

[3] It was he who, with five companies of his regiment—the 40th—successfully held the Chew House, at the battle of Germantown, just a year later, and practically won the day for the British.

THE HILL AT WOLF'S LANE, PELHAM MANOR.

(The Hutchinson Bridge is at the foot of the hill about three-quarters of a mile distant.)

Battalion of the Light Infantry. But if the Hessian loss cannot be given with official detail, it can be reckoned with substantial accuracy. For several* days, deserters from the enemy came into the American camp. Each was questioned separately and without the others' knowledge, and the sum of their testimony was that Howe's total loss was from eight hundred to a thousand—in other words, a total equal to twice the force of the patriots!†

As Dawson justly observes, "it is difficult to believe that four hundred Americans, familiar with the use of firearms, sheltered by ample defences from which they could fire deliberately and with their guns rested on the tops, could have fired volley after volley into a large body of men, massed in a compacted column in a narrow roadway, without having inflicted as extended damage as this."

The author of a recent history of the County has ridiculed this estimate, but in view of the present war in South Africa, it is easy to agree with Mr. Dawson. At the battle of Colenso the Boers, sheltered by their trenches, lost 38, and the British 1,350; and the records of Spion Kop and Magersfontein are

*Colonel Baldwin notes in his journal: "Oct. 19: The enemy lay pretty still this day, only plundering the Point indiscriminately, shewing no more favor to a Tory than a Whig. The country people are in great confusion, although they are chiefly Enemies and neuters (neutrals). We have been until very lately exceeding careful of the property of the country people and farmers, till we found it was only saving it for our Enemies, and now the fields of corn and stacks of wheat serve for fodder for our horses, the pigs, poultry, &c., for change of diet for the soldiers; this is chiefly near the disputed ground" (the 'Neutral Ground').

†The British loss at Bunker Hill was 1,054.

At Saratoga (the first day), 500.

At Germantown, 535.

So Pell's Point was greater than either the second or third, and within two hundred of the first.

THE BRIDGE OVER THE HUTCHINSON RIVER.

(*At the old Boston Post Road.*)

similar. At the battle of New Orleans (1815) Jackson's army, behind breastworks, lost but thirteen men, the British about two thousand.

The reason Glover was left to fight all day against such odds was undoubtedly Washington's belief that Howe was merely feigning an attack at Pell's Point, while the real attack would be made at Morrisania. Hence Glover's was the only force confronting what was really the greater part of Howe's army, engaged in the bold attempt to throw several thousand troops in a line from the Sound as far across the county [1] as might be necessary to get between the separate parts of the American army, and thus hem in the larger part between it and the two thousand left in New York with Percy. Had the plan succeeded, defeat piecemeal would have been the probable fate of the patriot forces. The heavy loss which Howe sustained probably led him to think Washington had a large force in his front, and so he went into camp, as we have seen, "awaiting re-enforcements" (*i. e.* Knyphausen with the rest of the Hessians). Colonel Baldwin's journal says: "The Generals (Washington and Lee), were highly pleased with our conduct, and have since returned us their thanks, as you will see by the orders." [2] The moral effect of the all-day

[1] The object was to cut the communications between Washington and the Eastern colonies, and to enclose him on all sides in his fastnesses on the north side of (New) York Island.—Lord Harris, (*quoted in Lushington*'s "*Life*").

[2] (Washington's congratulatory address):

Head-Quarters, October 21, 1776.

General Orders.

The Hurried situation of the Gen'l. the two last days having prevented him from paying that attention to Col. Glover and the officers and soldiers who were with him in the skirmish on Friday last their Merit & Good Behaviour deserved, he flatters himself that his thanks tho' delayed will nevertheless be acceptable to them as they are offered with great sincerity and cordiality.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, EAST CHESTER, BUILT 1764.

(This building was at one time used as a hospital by the British.)

(A witness of the battle—just across the valley from the scene. A number of British and Hessians are buried in the churchyard.)

encounter on the spirit of Glover's brigade [1] was excellent, and the delay which it caused Howe was particularly valuable to Washington, who by the twenty-fifth had safely reached White Plains with all his troops, save the garrison which had, unhappily, been left to garrison Fort Washington, where it was eventually to fall a prey to Howe on the sixteenth of November.

The Bibliography which I have added is taken mainly from Mr. Dawson's work, but has been re-arranged for the sake of convenience. It shows that most of the authorities cited give the battle but brief notice, while some omit any mention of it. I am confident my readers will agree with him that "the reader will find in the character and number of those who did recognize the achievements of those brave men, on that day, sufficient evidence of the great importance which those achievements possessed, and the great influence which they

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At the same time, he hopes that every other part of the Army will do their Duty with equal Bravery & Zeal whenever called upon, and neither Dangers nor Difficulties nor Hardships will discourage Soldiers engaged in the Cause of Liberty and while we are contending for all that Freemen hold dear & Valuable.

LEE'S ORDERS:

MILE SQUARE, October 19, 1776.

Gen'l Lee Returns his warmest thanks to Col. Glover & the Brigade under his Command, not only for their gallant behaviour yesterday, but for their prudent, cool, orderly & Soldierlike conduct in all respects. He assures these brave men that he shall omit no opportunity of Shewing his Gratitude. All the Wounded to be immediately sent to Valentine's Hill, at the second Liberty Pole, where Surgeons should Repair to dress them; they are afterwards [to be] forwarded to Fort Washington.

[1] A month before, General George Clinton, writing to the New York Assembly, and describing the encounter at Harlem Heights, said: "I consider our success in this small affair at this time almost equal to a victory; it has animated our troops and gave (*sic*) them new spirits."

Precisely similar words might have been written about Pell's Point.

secured, both in America and Europe, both of which are our sufficient warrant for presentation of them to our readers in as complete and accurate a form as possible."

It is fortunate that the battlefield is within the limits of Pelham Bay Park, and will therefore escape the fate of some other fields, which have been covered with buildings as population advanced. The Daughters of the American Revolution (Bronx Chapter, Mount Vernon, N. Y.), intend placing a suitably-inscribed bronze tablet on "Glover's Rock" to commemorate the event. It is to be hoped this will be accomplished soon after this work shall have been published, and thus the name and story of the BATTLE OF PELL'S POINT or PELHAM be perpetuated by a durable memento which will be seen by thousands, to whom this book and its author alike must necessarily remain unknown.

(I had hoped to give an adequate biographical notice of each of the officers mentioned in any way; but the utmost care in investigation of state and local records and correspondence with descendants has been fruitless in those cases where blanks are found.)

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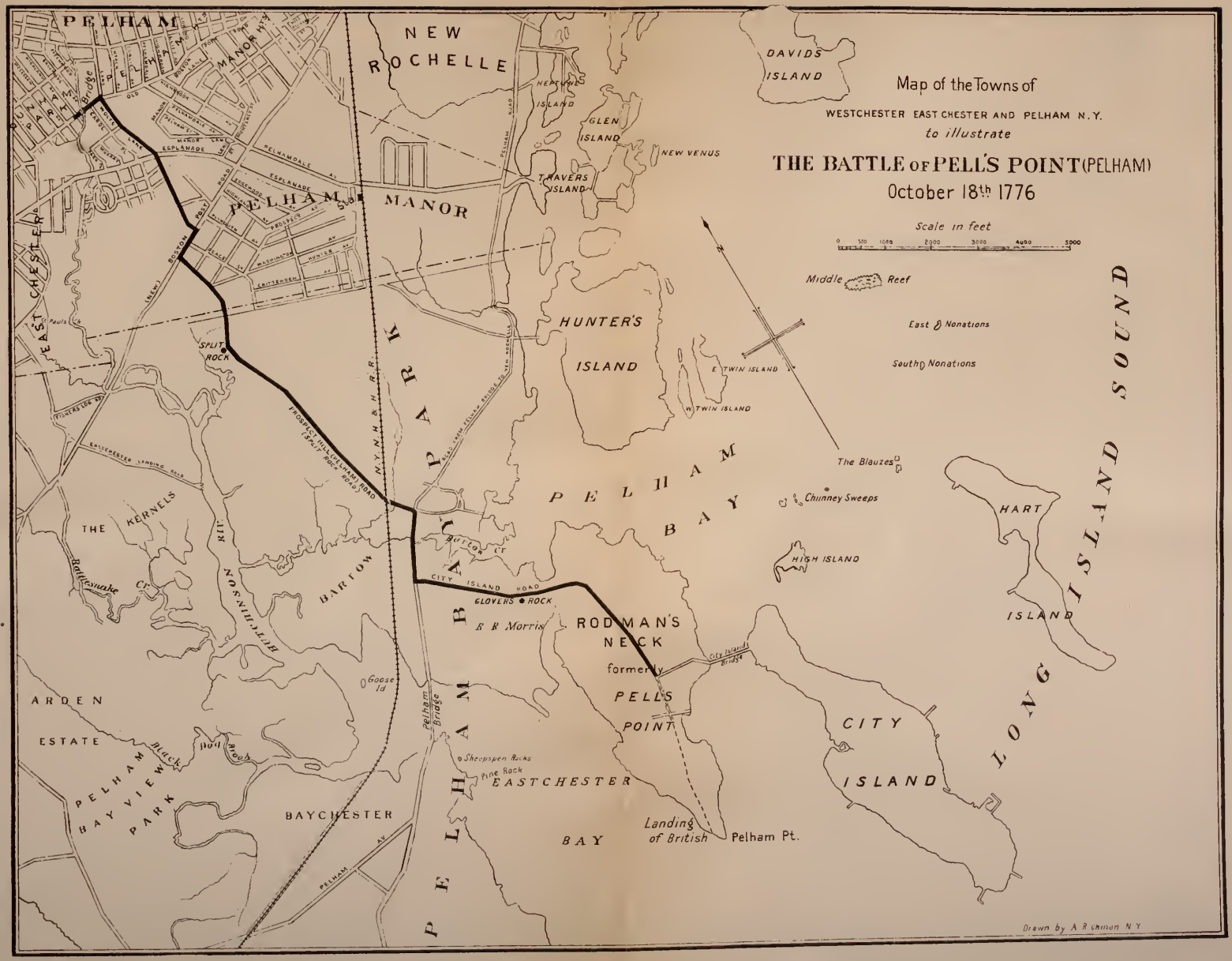
(Those marked * mention the movement from Throgg's Neck, but say nothing about the BATTLE OF PELHAM).


Map of the Towns of
WESTCHESTER EAST CHESTER AND PELHAM N.Y.
to illustrate
THE BATTLE OF PELL'S POINT (PELHAM)
October 18th 1776
Scale in feet
0 500 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000
PELHAM
MANOR
NEW ROCHELLE
DAVIDS ISLAND
NEWTOWN ISLAND
GLEN ISLAND
NEW VENUS
TRAVERS ISLAND
HUNTER'S ISLAND
E TWIN ISLAND
W TWIN ISLAND
Middle Reef
East 8 Nonations
South 9 Nonations
The Blauzes
Chimney Sweeps
HIGH ISLAND
HART ISLAND
LONG ISLAND SOUND
PELHAM BAY
EAST CHESTER
SPLIT ROCK
BOSTON ROAD
PELHAMDALE AV
ESPLANADE
PELHAM MANOR
PELHAM BRIDGE
PROSPECT HILL (PELHAM ROAD)
NEW ROCHELLE BRIDGE
N.Y.N.H.&H.R.R.
MAMARONECK RIVER
BARTON CR
CITY ISLAND ROAD
GLOVERS ROCK
E.R. Morris
RODMAN'S NECK
formerly
PELL'S POINT
City Island Bridge
THE KERNELS
Rattlesnake Cr
HUTCHINSON RIV
BARTOW
ARDEN ESTATE
Goose Id
Sheepspen Rocks
Pine Rock
EASTCHESTER BAY
Landing of British
Pelham Pt.
CITY ISLAND
BAYCHESTER
PELHAM BAYVIEW PARK
Drawn by A R Ulman N Y

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